

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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O 041657Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 0000

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CARACAS 8169

EXDIS

FOR OPERATIONS CENTER: PLEASE NOTIFY S/CCT-FEAREY OR HURWITZ
AND ARA/NC - DEVINE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, ASEC, EINV,VE

SUBJECT: NIEHOUS KIDNAPPING

1. JAKE LONGAN GAVE EMBASSY COPIES OF LETTER FROM KIDNAPPERS TO CANAVAN AND OWNES-ILLINOIS AND FROM WILLIAM NIEHOUS TO HIS WIFE. HE IS HIGHLY CONCERNED AT WHAT HE PERCEIVES TO BE THE MORE OMINOUS TONE OF BOTH LETTERS IN COMPARISON TO PAST COMMUNICATIONS. HE ALSO SAYS THAT URD DEPUTY FORTUNATO HERRERA HAS EMERGED ONCE AGAIN AS AN INTER-MEDIARY AND THAT CANAVAN IS SCHEDULED TO MEET WITH HERRERA AT 9:00 P.M., SUNDAY, IN CARACAS. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE PROPOSED LETTER FROM DONNA NIEHOUS TO HER HUSBAND WHICH THE KIDNAPPERS HAVE OFFERED TO DELIVER WILL BE TURNED OVER TO HERRERA AT THAT TIME. VENEZUELAN POLICE OFFICIALS WILL THEN ATTEMPT TO FOLLOW THE LETTER BACK TO THE KIDNAPPERS. LONGAN STATES THAT CANAVAN IS STILL PRESSING ERASTO FERNANDEZ TO OBTAIN APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF RANSOM AND THAT SO FAR FERNANDEZ WILL ONLY AGREE IF THE RANSOM PAYMENT IS PART OF AN EFFORT TO TRAP THE KIDNAPPERS.

2. LONGAN, WHO IS STILL CONVINCED THAT THE CASE IS IN ITS FINAL STAGES, ASKED THAT THE TEXT OF THE LETTERS BE TRANSMITTED TO WILLIAM COLEMAN OF O-I AT TELEPHONE NUMBER (419) 531-2647. HE ALSO ASKED THAT COLEMAN BE ADVISED TO STAND BY FOR A TELEPHONE CALL FROM LONGAN IN THE EVENT THE LATTER DECIDES THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT
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COLEMAN COME TO CARACAS IMMEDIATELY. NO PROMISES WERE

MADE TO LONGAN CONCERNING TRANSMITTAL OF THE LETTERS OR THE MESSAGE. HOWEVER, IF THE DEPARTMENT DECIDES NOT TO CONTACT COLEMAN, PLEASE ADVISE THE EMBASSY SO THAT LONGAN MAY BE ADVISED TO SEEK ALTERNATE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

3. TEXT OF LETTERS IS AS FOLLOWS:

A. "VENEZUELA, 29 JUNE 1976
"MR. CANABAAN (SC) AND DIRECTORS OF
OWENS- ILLINOIS:

" AS WE HAVE INDICATED ON INNUMERABLE OPPORTUNITIES, OUR ACTION AGAINST OWENS-ILLINOIS IS BASED ON POLITICAL MOTIVATIONS WHICH WILL CARRY US TO THE ULTIMATE CONSEQUENCES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CASE. MEANWHILE, WE HOLD AND WILL CONTINUE TO HOLD MR. WILLIAM F. NIEHOUS BECAUSE THE FULFILLMENT OF THE SANCTIONS IMPOSED BY OUR REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNALS NOW DEPENDS ON YOU.

"WE HAVE ALSO DENOUNCED, EVEN PUBLICLY, THAT BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND YOU APPEAR TO BE LITTLE INTERESTED IN THE LIFE OF A MAN, IN THIS CASE SOMEONE WHO HAS SERVED YOU DURING ALMOST ALL HIS LIFE AND WHO HAS BEEN A FIRM DEFENDER OF BOURGEOIS INTERESTS, THE LIFE OF MR. NIEHOUS. NEVERTHELESS, WE, CONTRARY TO HIS INTERESTS BUT WITH A PROFOUND RESPECT FOR THE PERSON, WHICH A GREAT HUMANITARIAN SENSE, PRODUCT OF OUR OWN MARXIST-LENINIST CONVICTIONS, BELIEVE WE SHOULD PRESSURE YOU SO THAT YOU WILL UNDERSTAND THAT MR. NIEHOUS IS TIRED, TIRED OF WAITING FOR YOU TO RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM YOU ARE FACTING. "MEANWHILE, WE HAVE ADOPTED AS A MEASURE, KEEPING MR. NIEHOUS INFORMED STEP-BY-STEP OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. HE KNOWS-- AMONG YOU-- WHO ARE WITH HIM AND WHO ARE AGAINST HIM. HE KNOWS WHO HAS BEEN IN DIRECT TOUCH WITH US AND WHAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT AND HE KNOWS THAT YOU HAVE NOT WISHED TO HASTEN HIS LIBERTY.

"ON THE OTHER HAND, WE INSIST THAT A PART OF THE MONEY SHOULD BE DELIVERED IN VENEZUELA, BECAUSE AMONG OTHER THINGS, IT IS THE ONLY CONCRETE FORM FOR YOU TO DEMONSTRATE A TRUE INTEREST TO END THIS STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS AND THE ONLY FORM OF VERIFYING THAT WHATEVER MOBILIZATION WE ENGAGE IN ABROAD WOULD NOT BE IN VAIN. WE WILL INDICATE THE MECHANISM FOR DELIVERY. FOR THE MOMENT,
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LIMIT YOURSELVES TO INFORMING US HOW MUCH OF THE TOTAL INDEMNIFICATION YOU OWE US IS AT HAND. AFTERWARD, WE WILL INFORM YOU OF THE REST.

" TO MR. CANABAAN WE INFORM THAT HE CAN CONTINUE HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH MR. "F" (NOTE: AN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO FORTUNATO HERRERA) OUR FIRST NEGOTIATOR. HE CAN BE GIVEN THE LETTER FROM MRS. DONNA NIEHOUS TO HER HUSBAND IF TH "BUSINESSMAN" (NOTE: A REFERENCE TO EMILIO CONDE

JAHN) HAS NOT BEEN LOCATED YET. FURTHER, WE WISH TO GIVE THE SAME EMPHASIS AND THE SAME INSISTENCE WE DID WITH MR. D. SPIELER WITH REGARD TO SECURITY MEASURES. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT WE WISH TO HAVE A TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH YOU THAT WOULD BE UNSUSPECTED BY THE POLICE. PRUDENCE IS ALSO A DETERMINING ELEMENT IN THE SPEED OF THE CASE.

" TO CONCLUDE, WE WISH TO INSIST THAT MR. NIEHOUS, TO THE EXTENT THAT IT DEPENDS UPON US, IS IN GOOD PHYSICAL AND PSYCHIC CONDITION. WE CONTRIBUTE BY ALL AVAILABLE MEANS SO THAT HIS SITUATION IS AS PLEASANT AS POSSIBLE. NEVER- THE LESS, WE DO NOT KNOW HOW LONG HE CAN HOLD ON WITHOUT FALLING INTO DAMAGING DESPERATIONS. THE EXCLUSIVE AND ONLY RESPONSIBILITY OF WHAT CAN HAPPEN TO MR. NIEHOUS-- BOTH BECAUSE OF IMPRUDENCE OR TARDINESS IN THE CONDUCT ASENCIO

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3834

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CARACAS 8169

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OF NEGOTIATIONS--WILL BE YOUR EXCLUSIVE RESPONSIBILITY.
"MEANWHILE, WE AWAIT A CONCISE REPLY WITH REGARD TO THE DEMAND FOR PAYMENT OF A PART OF THE MONEY IN THE COUNTRY BUT NEITHER OUR WAIT NOR THAT OF MR. NIEHOUS CAN BE INTERMINABLE.

"GROUPS OF REVOLUTIONARY COMMANDOS
OPERATIONS" ARGIMIRO GABALDON"

B. "JUNE 25-'76
"MY DEAREST DONNA-
"' HERE I GO AGAIN' - SOUNDS LIKE MCCARTNEY'S NEW SONG-
'I LOVE YOU.' I'M IN OK HEALTH BUT VERY SAD AND DEPRESSED MENTALLY. I TRIED TO EXPLAIN THAT IN MY LETTER OF

JUNE 18 AND AGAIN ON JUNE 22. ON JUNE 22,I ALSO WROTE TO THE COMPANY BUT DON'T REALLY KNOW IF YOU OR THEY HAVE RECEIVED ANY OF MY NOTES. THE GROUP HOLDING ME CAPTIVE SAYS YOU HAVE SO I SUPPOSE I SHOULD BELIEVE THEM.

" IN MY LAST NOTE I SUGGESTED YOU AND THE BOYS RETURN TO THE STATES AS IT APPEARS THIS PROBLEM IS TAKING A LONG TIME TO SOLVE. I HOPE SOMEONE HAS TAKEN ACTION IN THE PAST WEEK (16-25) TO DO SOMETHING. SO FAR I HAVE HEARD NOTHING FROM MY CAPTORS SO I ASSUME NOTHING HAS BEEN FIXED. THEY ARE WAITING FOR A FIRM DECISION FROM SOMEONE AS TO JUST WHAT IS GOING TO BE DONE AND WHEN. SO AM I' I'VE TALKED ABOUT BIRTHDAYS-GRADUATION-4TH OF JULY, ETC.,AND WHAT I REALIZE AND I HOPE OTHERS DO IS THAT I'M REALLY TALKING OR WRITING ABOUT IS LIFE. MY LIFE AND STAYING ALIVE. IT SEEMS TO ME IMPOSSIBLE THAT AFTER TAKING A STAND ON APRIL 1- PAYING THE WORKERS AND
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PUBLISHING THE REPORT AND AGREEING TO THE FOOD BAGS- STILL- ALMOST 3 MONTHS LATER A DECISION CAN'T BE REACHED TO SECURE MY RELEASE. I HOPE SOMEONE CAN EXPLAIN THE REASON FOR THE DELAY. THE LONGER THE DELAY- THE MORE DANGEROUS IT BECOMES. AS I UNDERSTAND IT NOW- THE GROUP IS WAITING FOR A FINAL ANSWER ABOUT PAYMENT OF THE AMOUNT AGREED TO FOR MY RELEASE, ALIVE AND WELL' I'VE BEEN TOLD THIS BEFORE THEREFORE I DON'T KNOW REALLY WHAT TYPE OF ANSWER I'LL BE RECEIVING.

HONEY, I LOVE YOU- I'M TRULY SORRY FOR ALL THE HEARTACKES I'VE CAUSED YOU. HOPEFULLY I'LL BE ABLE TO MAKE AMENDS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. I'D LOVE TO SPEND TIME AT CAPE MAY POINT IF ONE OF THE HOUSES IS STILL AVAILABLE. WE CAN LOOK FORWARD TO SETTLING AGAIN IN TOLEDO. IT'S A BIT BIGGER THAN VINELAND BUT CLOSE ENOUGH TO VISIT ON LONG WEEKENDS.

MARK-DAVID AND CRAIG CERTAINLY ARE DUE A NEW LIFE IN THE AMERICAN WAY. (WHY I DIDN'T GO TO VINELAND INSTEAD OF HERE- I'LL NVER FORGIVE MYSELF FOR THAT ERROR.) BUT THE BOYS SHOULD ENJOY A CHANGE. THEY DESERVE IT. I'M NOT MAKING MUCH SENSE IN THIS NOTE BUT I WANT TO COVER A FEW POINTS IN CASE YOU ARE GOING TO THE STATES SOON AS I SUGGESTED. I IMAGINE YOU SAID- NO, I WON'T GO- BUT THINK ABOUT IT- TO STAY HERE WILL ACCOMPLISH LITTLE IF A DECISION HAS NOT BEEN REACHED AT THIS LATE DATE. YOUR STAYING IN THE HOTEL MUST BE DIFFICULT NOW. AND THE BOYS ARE PROBABLY BORED. AGAIN- IF THIS MATTER COULD OR IS TO BE SOLVED IN A MATTER OF DAYS- OK- BUT THAT IS IN THE HANDS OF SOMEONE ELSE. YOU MIGHT ASK THEM OR ALSO EXPRESS MY CONCERN TO THEM IN STRONG LANGUAGE.

". MAYBE THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR O-I IN VENZ(SIC) ARE THE REASON FOR THE DELAY. IF THAT'S THE CASE-TIME

MEANS NOTHING. THE PRESIDENT WILL TAKE MONTHS TO AGREE
UPON A PRICE- IF O-I IS WAITING FOR THAT BEFORE AGREEING
TO THE RESCUE THEN I MADE A WRONG DECISION A LONG TIME
AGO. I HOPE MY FEELINGS NOW ARE DUE TO THIS LONG CAPTURE
AND NOT THE TRUE REASON. THE GROUP HOLDING ME CLAIMS
THIS IS WHAT'S WRONG WITH CAPTIALISM (SIC) - MONEY IS
MORE IMPORTANT THAN HUMAN BEINGS.

" HONEY, TAKE A LONG TIME IN DECIDING WHAT TO DO- I
MISS YOU AND THE BOYS VERY MUCH BUT I DO THINK YOU WOULD
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BE HAPPIER-MORE AT EASE IN THE U.S. THAN HERE WAITING
DAY IN AND DAY OUT. CONSIDER IT ANYWAY. AND MAKE YOUR
CONCERN AND MY DISAPPOINTMENT KNOWN TO THE O-I GROUP.
I SAY THAT IF IN FACT THEY HAVE AGREED TO WHAT THE
GROUP CLAIMS BUT HAVE DELAYED IN TAKING ACTION.

" IT APPEARS THIS NOTE IS TO LEAVE SHORTLY, SO I MUST
CLOSE. I DON'T KNOW IF THIS WILL BE MY LAST CONTACT WITH
YOU FOR SOME TIME OR NOT. I HOPE THIS IS OVER IN A MATTER
OF HOURS BUT I HAVE LITTLE CONFIDENCE THAT IT WILL BE.

". ALL MY LOVE TO THE PARENTS- TO JUDY-POLLY-FRITZ-
GLENN-ETC. SAY HI TO THE FRIENDS. AND HONEY-WHAT SHOULD
I SAY-- I LOVE YOU-I'M SORRY-I MISS YOU-I MISS THE BOYS.
TELL MARK -DAVID & CRAIG THAT THEY WILL BE RESPONSIBLE
FOR YOU FOR A WHILE LONGER. AND THEY ARE BECOMING MEN
BEFORE THEY HAD REALLY EXPECTED TO REALIZE SUCH A
CHANCE.

"BYE FOR NOW

-ALL MY LOVE

"ME BILL"

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